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For immediate release:

In this month's edition:

1. Minimally Invasive Surgery Specialist Francesco Palazzo, MD, FACS, Joins Department of Surgery at Jefferson
2. Temple is Among First to Use Angiogenesis to Prevent Amputations

Editors note: Research, new techniques and improved facilities by Philadelphia International Medicine hospitals and physicians may lead to new ways to treat some of our most challenging diseases. Below are just some examples from our hospitals.

Minimally Invasive Surgery Specialist Francesco Palazzo, MD, FACS, Joins Department of Surgery at Jefferson

Francesco Palazzo, MD, FACS, a specialist in minimally invasive gastrointestinal surgery, joins the department of surgery at Thomas Jefferson University

Dr. Palazzo returns to Jefferson, where he completed a residency, from Vittorio Emanuele – Policlinico University Hospital in Catania, Italy. He will provide clinical services primarily at Jefferson's Methodist Hospital while teaching students, residents and fellows at both Jefferson and Methodist.

“It gives us great pleasure to welcome Dr. Palazzo back to Jefferson and Philadelphia,” said Charles J. Yeo, MD, FACS, Samuel D. Gross professor and chair of surgery. “He is a highly skilled surgeon and teacher who will be a true asset to Jefferson community.”

Dr. Palazzo earned his medical degree, graduating cum laude, from the University of Catania, School of Medicine in 1997. From 1997 to 2002, he remained at the school to perform a residency in General Surgery. He performed a second residency in General Surgery at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital in Philadelphia from 2002 to 2007, where he earned the Excellence in Teaching Award and the Herbert E. Cohn, MD, Award for Excellence in Surgical Technique. While a resident, Dr. Palazzo also received the Outstanding Laparoendoscopic Resident Award from the Society of Laparoendoscopic Surgeons. He went on to complete a one year fellowship

in Advanced Laparoscopic Surgery at the University of California, San Francisco, in 2008, during which time he also acted as a surgical services consultant for the San Francisco Veteran Administration Medical Center. Returning to Catania, Italy, Dr. Palazzo then served for three years as a staff physician and clinical instructor of surgery at Vittorio Emanuele – Policlinico University Hospital, until returning to Jefferson this year.

Board certified in general surgery, Dr. Palazzo is a fellow of the American College of Surgeons and is a member of the International Society for Surgery, Society for Surgery of the Alimentary Tract, Society of American Gastrointestinal Endoscopic Surgeons and Italian Society for Obesity Surgery.

As the author of numerous scientific papers, book chapters and abstracts, Dr. Palazzo has presented his findings at a variety of national and international meetings. In addition, he has served as section editor for minimally invasive surgery of the Open Surgery Journal, worked on the Scientific Committee of the Italian Association of Public Hospital Surgeons and acted as a surgical expert on an Italian Ministry of Health and World Health Organization workgroup dedicated to surgical safety in Italian operating rooms.

Temple Among First to Use Angiogenesis to Prevent Amputations

Leg amputation due to insufficient blood flow (critical limb ischemia) is common in certain patient populations, particularly diabetics, smokers, and those with kidney failure. In the Philadelphia region alone, more than 1,000 leg amputations are performed each year.

“This is an unacceptably high number of amputations that could be lowered using alternative, multi-specialty therapies that are now available here at Temple University Hospital,” said Eric Choi, MD, FACS, chief of vascular surgery.

These therapies are offered through the hospital's new [Limb Salvage Center](#), which began operation in March 2011, and is the first in the region to offer a limb-saving model of focused comprehensive care.

The Limb Salvage Center brings together all of the specialties needed to treat patients in a timely manner, including vascular surgery, podiatry, cardiology, diabetology, plastic surgery, orthopaedic surgery, interventional radiology and physical medicine and rehabilitation.

In addition to being a center where patients can see multiple specialists in a timely manner – something that is critically important in order to prevent tissue death in the leg – the center offers cutting-edge clinical trials.

“Starting this month, we will be the first hospital in the region to participate in a trial called REVIVE – which involves injecting enhanced bone marrow into a patient’s leg in order to promote the growth of new blood vessels,” says Dr. Choi. “This approach is called therapeutic angiogenesis, and the hope is that the new blood vessels will improve blood flow in the leg.”

“Temple is one of the few academic medical centers here looking at angiogenesis as a possible therapeutic alternative to leg amputation,” added Dr. Choi.

According to Dr. Choi, weeks or months are often lost because a patient goes from specialist to specialist looking for help. But a patient’s condition can quickly worsen beyond repair, leaving no other option but amputation.

“There are so many diabetics out there whose wounds fester, and they don’t know about other opportunities to save their leg,” he said. “I’ve seen young patients who required leg amputations that could easily have been avoided. For patients who are at serious risk, we want to be the go-to experts to help prevent that final option of amputation.”

Philadelphia International Medicine is an organization that provides medical and patient support services to international patients. It also provides continuing medical education and health care training and education to international physicians, administrators and other practitioners. As the international department of several Philadelphia-area hospitals, international patients gain access to physicians and hospitals rated among the best in the world through one telephone call to PIM. You can reach PIM by calling 1-215-563-4733; fax, 1-215-563-2777; or e-mail, physicians@philadelphiamedicine.com. You can find out more about PIM through its Website at www.philadelphiamedicine.com.